

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently amended):

A system comprising:

a first plurality of peer devices;

a first network server coupled to the first plurality of peer devices, the first network server to manage and maintain a first name-to-address resolution index for a first network; that includes a list of addresses for the first plurality of peer devices; and

a second plurality of peer devices;

a second network server coupled to the second plurality of peer devices and to the first network server, the second network server to manage and maintain a second name-to-address resolution index for a second network, that includes a list of addresses for the second plurality of peer devices, the second network server communicatively coupled to the first server and configured to query the first name-to-address index such that the second network server responds to a request for a peer device address of one of the first plurality of peer devices as though the request was for a peer device address of one of the second plurality of peer devices. share its name-to-address resolution index with the first server upon request by the first server to discover a peer address without reliance on a common name-to-address resolution server.

Claim 2. (Original):

The system of claim 1 wherein the first and second network servers are at equivalent hierarchical levels.

Claim 3. (Original):

The system of claim 1 wherein the first and second network servers have a common zone relationship .

Claim 4. (Original):

The system of claim 3 wherein access authorization is required before a common zone is established.

Claim 5. (Currently amended):

The system of claim 3 further comprising:

a third plurality of peer devices; and

a third network server coupled to the third plurality of peer devices and to the second network server, the third network server to manage and maintain a third name-to-address

resolution index for a third network, that includes a list of addresses for the third plurality of peer devices, wherein the second and third network servers have a common zone relationship.

Claim 6. (Currently amended):

The system of claim 5 wherein the second network server is also configured to query the third name-to-address index such that the second network server responds to a request for a peer device address of one of the third plurality of peer devices as though the request was for a peer device address of one of the second plurality of peer devices. ~~search the name-to-address resolution index of the third network server upon an address request by the first network server.~~

Claim 7. (Currently amended):

The system of claim 1 wherein the first network server is also configured to query the second name-to-address index such that the first network server responds to a request for a peer device address of one of the second plurality of peer devices as though the request was for a peer device address of one of the first plurality of peer devices. ~~share its name-to-address resolution index with the second network server upon request by the second network server.~~

Claim 8. (Currently amended):

A server device comprising:

an input interface to receive ~~messages;~~ messages from a plurality of connected peer devices; and

a processing unit coupled to the input interface, the processing unit to manage communications to the plurality of connected peer devices at least one peer on a first network and configured to receive and respond to name-to-address resolution requests from the plurality of connected peer devices, the processing unit including a name-to-address index that maintains a list of addresses for the plurality of connected peer devices at least one peer on the first network, the processing unit configured to query other devices a second name-to-address index included on a second server device configured to manage a second plurality of connected peer devices, the second name-to-address index maintaining a list of addresses for the second plurality of connected peer devices, such that the server device responds to a request for a peer device address of one of the second plurality of connected peer devices as though the request was for a peer device address of one of the first plurality of connected peer devices. ~~that manage communications on other networks if the processing unit is unable to resolve the name-to-address resolution request.~~

Claim 9. (Original):

The device of claim 8 further comprising:

an output interface to couple the processing unit to the at least one peer on the first network.

Claim 10. (Original):

The device of claim 8 wherein the processing unit responds to a name-to-address resolution request by sending the requested address if it is found, and sending an address not found reply if the address is not found.

Claim 11. (Original):

The device of claim 8 being at an equivalent hierarchical level as the other network management device it queries if it is unable to resolve the requested address.

Claim 12. (Original):

The device of claim 8 wherein the device establishes common zone relationships with the other devices it queries.

Claim 13. (Original):

The device of claim 12 wherein the device provides access authorization before establishing a common zone.

Claim 14. (Currently amended):

A method comprising:

establishing a common zone relationship for name-to-address resolution sharing between a first network including a first server and a first plurality of peer devices coupled to the first server, and a second network including a second server and a second plurality of peer devices coupled to the second server, each server managing and maintaining a list of addresses for the plurality of peer devices coupled to the server; ~~two or more networks;~~

receiving a request at the first server from a first peer included in the first plurality of peer devices for the address of a second peer included in the second plurality of peer devices; ~~peer;~~

checking ~~a local name-to-address index~~ the list of addresses maintained by the first server for the requested address of the second peer;

checking the list of addresses maintained by the second server without relying on a higher level server common zone name-to-address index if the requested address is not found in the list of addresses maintained by the first server; ~~local name-to-address index;~~ and

returning the requested address to the first peer if the address is found.

Claim 15. (Original):

The method of claim 14 further comprising:

returning an indication that the requested address was not found to the first peer if the requested address is not found.

Claim 16. (Original):

The method of claim 14 wherein establishing a common zone relationship requires authorization.

Claim 17. (Currently amended):

The method of claim 14 wherein there is no common zone relationship between the first server and the second server, and derivative common zone name-to-address resolution is selectively permitted by a server having common zone relationships with the first server and the second server. ~~permitted.~~

Claim 18. (Currently amended):

A machine-readable medium comprising at least one instruction to resolve a peer address, which when executed by a processing unit, causes the processing unit to perform operations comprising:

establishing a common zone relationship for name-to-address resolution sharing between a first network including a first server and a first plurality of peer devices coupled to the first server, and a second network including a second server and a second plurality of peer devices coupled to the second server, each server managing and maintaining a list of addresses for the plurality of peer devices coupled to the server; ~~two or more networks;~~

receiving a request at the first server from a first peer included in the first plurality of peer devices for the address of a second peer included in the second plurality of peer devices; ~~peer;~~

checking a ~~local name-to-address index~~ the list of addresses maintained by the first server for the requested address of the second peer;

checking the list of addresses maintained by the second server without relying on a higher level server common zone name-to-address index if the requested address is not found in the list of addresses maintained by the first server; ~~local name-to-address index;~~ and

returning the requested address to the first peer if the address is found.

Claim 19. (Original):

The machine-readable medium of claim 18 further comprising:

returning an indication that the requested address was not found to the first peer if the requested address is not found.

Claim 20. (Original):

The machine-readable medium of claim 18 wherein authorization is required to establish a common zone relationship.

Claim 21. (Currently amended):

The machine-readable medium of claim 18 wherein there is no common zone relationship between the first server and the second server, and derivative common zone name-to-address

Appl. No. 10/011,029
Amdt. dated 02/22/2005
Reply to Office Action of 01/27/2005

resolution is selectively permitted by a server having common zone relationships with the first server and the second server. provided.